

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested. The above amendments are made only to comply with matters of form (i.e., rewriting allowable claims in independent form) expressly set forth in the Advisory Action. Therefore, the above amendments comply with the after-final amendment requirements of 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

Claims 1, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 22, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 43, 48, 49, 51, 54, and 55 have been amended. Claims 8, 11, 29, 32, 50, and 53 have been canceled. Therefore, Claims 1, 3-7, 9, 10, 12-22, 24-28, 30, 31, 33-43, 45-49, 51, 52, and 54-66 are currently pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enter the amendments.

The Advisory Action indicated that Claims 11, 32, and 53 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. No claims intervened between Claims 11, 32, 53, and the base claims upon which Claims 11, 32, and 53 depended. Claims 1, 22, and 43 (the base claims) have been amended to include the limitations of Claims 11, 32, and 53, respectively. Therefore, the amendments to Claims 1, 22, and 43 effectively rewrite Claims 11, 32, and 53 into independent form, thereby complying with the matters of form expressly set forth in the Advisory Action.

The Advisory Action was the first indication from the U.S. Patent Office that any of the pending claims were directed to allowable subject matter, so the Applicants could not have been expected to make these amendments in response to any previous action.

Claims 11, 32, and 53 have been canceled because their limitations are now contained within Claims 1, 22, and 43, respectively.

Claims 8, 29, and 50 have been canceled because they are superseded by the limitations now contained Claims 1, 22, and 43, respectively.

Claims 9, 33, and 51 have been amended to depend from Claims 1, 22, and 43, respectively, rather than Claims 8, 29, and 50, which have been canceled.

The cancellation of Claims 11, 32, and 53, also necessitated the amendments of Claims 12, 13, 33, 34, 54, and 55 so that Claims 12, 13, 33, 34, 54, and 55 would not depend from canceled claims.

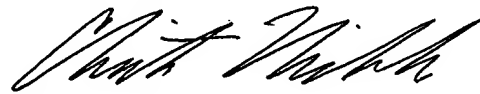
Claims 6, 7, 27, 28, 48, and 49 contained grammatical errors (the word "preventing" should have been in a different verb tense: "prevents"). Claims 6, 7, 27, 28, 48, and 49 have been amended only to remedy these grammatical errors. The amendments to Claims 6, 7, 27, 28, 48, and 49 do not alter the scopes of those claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that since the amendments made herein do not increase the scope of any claim to be broader than the scopes of the claims that the Advisory Action indicated were allowable, there should not be any need for the Examiner to perform any additional search in response to the amendments made herein. Consequently, there should be no need for the Applicants to file a Request for Continued Examination. For all of the above reasons, Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments set forth above.

Applicants respectfully submit that, as amended, all pending claims are patentable over the art of record, including the art cited but not applied. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of all the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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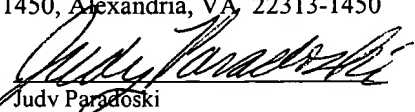
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on March 10, 2006

by


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